

Lorna McAusland Childminding Child Minding

Gourock

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
26 November 2025

Service provided by:
Lorna McAusland

Service provider number:
SP2018989813

Service no:
CS2018365832

About the service

Lorna McAusland provides a childminding service from their family home in Gourock, Inverclyde. Children are cared for in an open plan lounge, kitchen and dining space and have access to an upstairs bathroom. Children also have access to a fully enclosed garden to the rear of the property. The service is located close to local amenities including early learning and childcare settings, schools, parks and community green spaces.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family. At the time of our inspection four children were registered with the service.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 26 November 2025 between 12:30 and 14:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- issued digital questionnaires to families using the service and received no responses
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing interactions, which supported them to feel safe and secure.
- Children were confident, engaged, and able to lead their own play in a thoughtfully planned environment.
- Respectful relationships with children and families contributed to strong partnerships that supported children's wellbeing and learning.
- The childminder demonstrated a good understanding of children's individual needs and adapted their practice appropriately to support each child's wellbeing and development.
- The childminder should continue with their plans to further access professional learning and training opportunities.
- The childminder should ensure that when children require more than one medication, documentation is completed for each medication to ensure accurate records are maintained that support safe administration.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 5 – Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder was welcoming and engaged well during the inspection process. They were open to discussions and welcomed any suggestions and feedback to support improvement. For example, we suggested some small amendments to the complaints and child protection policy and the childminder was responsive to our suggestions. This demonstrated commitment to providing a high-quality service.

The childminder demonstrated a nurturing and responsive approach, which created a warm, inclusive environment that supported children's emotional wellbeing. They had updated the service vision to reflect changes, such as no longer caring for school-aged children, ensuring it aligned with aspirations for younger children and positively influenced their experiences. While the vision and values had been reviewed, they were not developed in partnership with children and families. We discussed the benefits of involving them in future reviews, and the childminder agreed to consult meaningfully so the vision reflects what matters most to those using the service.

The childminder valued parents' and children's views and actively sought feedback on the service. This strengthened relationships and ensured care reflected what mattered most to families. Feedback was gathered through informal daily discussions, both in person and via the digital platform 'WhatsApp', as well as formal processes such as questionnaires. No suggestions for improvement had been received, but the childminder told us any feedback would inform improvement planning. This demonstrated a commitment to using feedback to enhance the quality of care and experiences for children.

To support improvement, the childminder had previously used the Care Inspectorate guidance document 'Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to engage in reflective practice and self-evaluation. This helped identify what was working well and what could be developed further. The childminder was becoming familiar with the new framework from Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland and planned to use this to inform future self-evaluation. This reflected adaptability and a clear focus on continuous improvement.

The childminder's improvement plan included a clear intention to undertake further professional learning and training. We encouraged them to progress with this to strengthen their existing knowledge and skills, supporting high-quality practice and ensuring children's care continues to align with current best practice and guidance.

Children play and learn 5 – Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Interactions between the childminder and children were warm, responsive, and respectful. Children were comfortable approaching the childminder and frequently invited them into their play, indicating strong, trusting relationships. The childminder was attuned to children's verbal and non-verbal cues and responded sensitively, supporting emotional wellbeing and promoting a sense of security.

Children were confident in leading their own play and moved freely around the space, selecting resources that were accessible and thoughtfully arranged to spark their interest. For example, palette paints, liquid paint, and a variety of creative tools were set out on the dining table, enabling children to explore at a time of their choosing. This resulted in children enjoying activities such as painting a ghost family and creating colourful firework paintings. These opportunities promoted choice, creativity, and exploration, supporting children's learning and enjoyment.

Children had access to a wide range of resources, including books, musical instruments, matching and sorting games, puzzles, and materials for mark making. These supported early literacy and numeracy development in an engaging and meaningful way. The childminder used developmentally appropriate commenting, extending, and explaining during play to encourage curiosity and problem-solving. These purposeful interactions contributed to children's enjoyment, engagement, and learning. As part of ongoing service development, the childminder could explore ways to incorporate digital learning to further support problem-solving and extend learning opportunities.

Planning was responsive and child-centred, with experiences carefully linked to children's interests and personal plans. The childminder used their knowledge of each child to tailor the environment to individual preferences. Observations and next steps were recorded alongside photographs in individual folders, creating a rich picture of progress. Photographs captured children engaging in varied play and learning experiences both at home and in the wider community, including visits to local parks and soft play centres. This approach supported children to develop confidence, curiosity, and a sense of belonging. To strengthen these processes further, observations could be recorded in more detail to enhance assessment and provide clearer evidence of progress over time.

Developmental trackers were in place and effectively supported the childminder to identify gaps in learning at a glance, enabling timely support for children's development. We suggested adding dates to the trackers to create a more robust process for monitoring progress over time and to ensure children's achievements are clearly documented and celebrated.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children benefitted from caring and nurturing interactions that promoted their wellbeing. The childminder was consistently warm, kind and responsive to individual needs, creating a supportive environment. Children were encouraged to share their views throughout the day, influencing decision-making within daily routines. This fostered a sense of being valued and included.

Partnerships with families were strengthened through shared activities and seasonal events, fostering a sense of belonging. Daily conversations and digital messaging supported open and responsive communication, contributing to trust and confidence in the service.

The childminder's home was organised to support care routines, with clear areas for play, meals, and rest. Individualised routines, including sleep, contributed to a calm and nurturing environment. When a young child woke from a nap, the childminder responded with warmth and reassurance, offering cuddles and a drink. This demonstrated highly responsive practice, fostering emotional security and stability for children.

Nappy-changing procedures were not observed; however, the childminder clearly explained the routine. This included using Personal Protective Equipment to maintain hygiene and measures to protect children's privacy and dignity. These practices supported positive and respectful relationships, promoting dignity, trust, and respect.

Personal plans were in place for all children and developed using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included. These plans captured key information about each child's strengths, needs, and interests. They were shared with families and updated regularly to remain relevant. Parents contributed meaningfully, ensuring care was individualised and responsive. This collaborative approach ensured children received care and support tailored to their needs.

To strengthen record-keeping and support safe practice, the childminder should ensure that when a child requires more than one medication, separate documentation is completed for each medication. This will maintain accurate records and promote safe administration, upholding children's health and wellbeing.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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